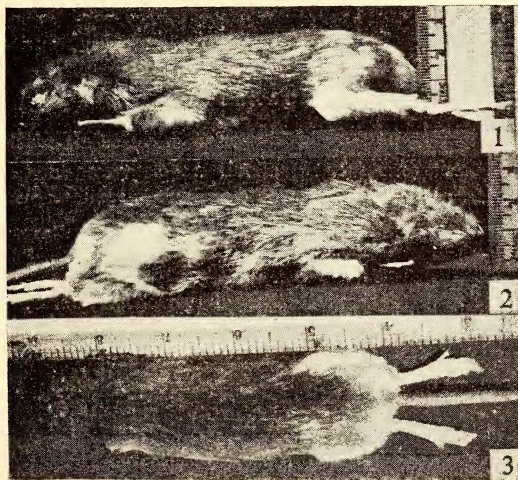


Miscellaneous Notes

1. PARTIAL ALBINISM IN WHITEBELLY RAT, *RATTUS NIVIVENTER* HODGSON, FROM KHASI HILLS

(With one photograph)

Albinism is not uncommon in the genus *Rattus* Fischer, 1803. It is frequently met with in *Rattus rattus* Linnaeus, and has been recorded by Hossack (1907), Gibson-Hill (1950), and Harrison (1950). Gibson-Hill (1950) and Joshee & Kamath (1963) have reported it in *R. norvegicus* (Berkenhout). Harrison & Lim (1951) have recorded it in *R. cremoriventer* (Miller). So far as is known to us, albinism has not been recorded in *R. niviventer* Hodgson. Hence, the present case of partial albinism is considered worthy of record.



Partial albinism in *Rattus niviventer* Hodgson

1. Left side view; 2. Right side view; 3. Dorsal view

While identifying the rats of the Khasi Hills, where *Rattus niviventer mentosus* Thomas is quite common, we have come across a partial albino specimen of this race in a lot of 8 specimens collected from Shillong Peak.

The specimen is a male, measuring (in mm.) head and body 136, tail 190, ear 20, hind foot excluding claw 30.

The albinism occurs mainly on the posterior region and is found to some extent on the forelegs (Photo, Figs. 1 and 2). Normally, the pure white colour should be restricted to the belly up to the tip of the mouth ventrally and to the under surface of the feet and toes, but in this specimen it covers the whole right and left hindfeet with a sprinkling of normal brown-coloured hairs on each. The rump is pure white extending forward on both sides—on the right to nearly one-third of the head and body length and a little less on the left.

The normal mid-dorsal colour extends to the tail separating the white portions on both the sides (Photo, Fig. 3).

R. niviventer, according to Roonwal (1949), is essentially a rat of the dense evergreen jungle and riverain jungle, favouring the vicinity of hill-streams. The locality from which the present specimen was collected is also dense evergreen jungle far from human habitation. Thus it is unlikely that this instance of partial albinism is a result of the inter-mixing of domestic rat with *R. niviventer*.

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2. BEHAVIOUR OF LESSER WHISTLING TEAL *[DENDROCYGNA JAVANICA (HORSFIELD)]* IN ALIPORE ZOO, CALCUTTA

(With a plate)

On my way to the Andamans in February 1964, I was delayed for a few days in Calcutta. The Alipore Zoo is always an attraction and I spent some time very pleasantly there. The lake was full of Whistling Teal (*Dendrocygna javanica*), which spend the day here and leave at dusk to feed many miles away. This bird is too slow a flier to afford much